



Reporting of Oil, Gas and Chemical Spills

Legal Requirements

In Connecticut, any oil or petroleum product, chemical or waste that is released in any manner constitutes a spill [CGS Section 22a-452c]. Spills also include gasoline overflows and leaks from underground and above ground tanks. Any size spill must be reported to the CT-DEP's Oil and Chemical Spill Response Division.

What Immediate Actions Should be Taken?

In case of a spill, stop the flow, contain the spill, call 911, report the spill to CT-DEP (see below), and then report to the National Response Center if necessary (see below).

When Should a Spill be Reported to the CT- DEP?

In Connecticut, any size spill of oil or petroleum product, any chemical, or waste, must be reported to the CT-DEP. The party causing the spill or pollution and the property owner are responsible for:

- Immediately reporting the spill to the CT-DEP's Oil and Chemical Spill Response Division at (860) 424-3338, and beginning the appropriate containment and cleanup efforts, which must be performed by a licensed contractor [CGS Section 22a-454]. The telephone number is staffed 24-hours/seven days a week.
- Completing a written "Report of Petroleum or Chemical Product Discharge, Spillage, Seepage, Filtration" and mailing it to CT-DEP within 24 hours. Contact the CT-DEP at (860) 424-3377 for the form or it may be downloaded – www.dep.state.ct.us/wst/oilspill/spillrep.pdf.

Connecticut law establishes what is called "strict liability" for spills of most pollutants into the environment. This means that the person or business causing the spill and the owner of the property where the pollution occurred are financially responsible for clean up, regardless of fault. All spills must be reported and dealt with quickly.

When Should an Oil Spill be Reported to the Federal Government?

Section 311 of the Clean Water Act disallows the discharge of oil into or upon the navigable waters of the United States, their adjoining shorelines, or where natural resources may be affected [33 USC 1321, 40 CFR 110].

You must report an oil spill to the National Response Center at (800) 424-8802 if:

1. the spill is to navigable waters or the adjoining shoreline, or
2. water quality standards could be violated, or
3. the spill causes a sheen or discoloration, or
4. the spill causes a sludge or emulsion.

When you call the National Response Center to report an oil spill or release, the staff person will ask you the following questions:

1. Name, location and telephone number;
2. Name and address of the party responsible for the incident;
3. Date and time of the incident;
4. Location of the incident;
5. Source and cause of the release or spill;
6. Types of materials released or spilled;
7. Quantity of material released or spilled;
8. Danger or threat posed by the release or spill;
9. Number and type of injuries (if any);
10. Weather conditions at the incident location; and
11. Any other information that may help emergency personnel respond to the incident.

When Should a Hazardous Chemical Spill be Reported to the Federal Government?

You must report a hazardous chemical spill to the National Response Center at (800) 424-8802 if the release could threaten human health off the property.

When you call the National Response Center to report a hazardous chemical spill, the staff person will ask you the following questions:

- The chemical name;
- An indication of whether the substance is extremely hazardous;
- An estimate of the quantity released into the environment;
- The time and duration of the release;
- Whether the release occurred into air, water, and/or land;
- Any known or anticipated acute or chronic health risks associated with the emergency, and where necessary, advice regarding medical attention for exposed individuals;
- Proper precautions, such as evacuation or sheltering in place; and
- Name and telephone number of contact person.

The facility owner or operator is also required to provide a written follow-up emergency notice as soon as practicable after the release. The follow-up notice or notices must:

- Update information include in the initial notice, and
- Provide information on actual response actions taken and advice regarding medical attention necessary for exposed individuals.

Did you know? In the case of spill, the CT-DEP will give you the opportunity to hire a licensed environmental contractor. If you do not make immediate proper arrangements, the CT-DEP may make direct arrangements for the clean up, billing you later for the cost. You have 30 days to pay from the date that the CT-DEP demands payment. After that time, interest and administration costs start to accrue.

2004 Pit Stops Fact Sheets

Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection, 79 Elm Street, Hartford, CT 06106-5127
Office of Pollution Prevention (860) 424-3297 www.dep.state.ct.us/wst/p2/vehicle/abindex.htm
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